

LISTING OF THE CLAIMS:

Claims 1-18 (Cancelled).

19. (Currently Amended) A membrane pump including a membrane which is actuated by a crank drive, said membrane bounding in conjunction with a concave pump body surface, a pump chamber, an inlet channel and an outlet channel which open to respectively an inlet opening and an outlet opening formed in the pump body surface, said membrane having a membrane core and an elastically deformable membrane ring, said membrane core having a convex surface, which is conformed to the pump body surface, said inlet opening being arranged in a region of the pump body surface which the membrane initially approaches during an expulsion stroke of the crank drive and wherein the elastically deformable membrane ring closes the inlet opening before the reaching of top dead center by the crank drive, and wherein an inlet valve is provided which is arranged in the region of the inlet opening of the inlet channel,

characterized in that in an edge region of the inlet opening, there is formed a surrounding control edge against which the elastically deformable membrane ring bears so as to close the inlet valve, wherein said surrounding control edge is formed as a recess inside the pump body surface and wherein said inlet valve is located at said recess.

20. (Previously Presented) The membrane pump according to claim 19, wherein the inlet valve includes a valve plate which covers over the inlet opening.
21. (Previously Presented) The membrane pump according to claim 19, wherein the middle point of the inlet opening is located at least approximately in the plane of rotation of the crank of said crank drive.
22. (Previously Presented) The membrane pump according to claim 19, wherein the elastically deformable membrane ring closes the inlet opening at a rotary cranking position of the crank drive which is at an angle of up to 90° before top dead center of the crank drive.
23. (Previously Presented) The membrane pump according to claim 22, wherein the elastically deformable membrane ring closes the inlet opening at a rotary cranking position of the crank drive which is at an angle within the range of about 20° to 90° before top dead center of the crank drive.
24. (Previously Presented) The membrane pump according to claim 19, wherein the middle axis of the inlet channel is oriented perpendicularly to the pump body surface.

25. (Previously Presented) The membrane pump according to claim 19, wherein the outlet opening of the outlet channel is located in a region of the pump body surface which is last approached by the membrane and which is reached earliest by the membrane at the top dead center of the crank drive.

26. (Previously Presented) The membrane pump according to claim 19, wherein the middle point of the outlet opening of the outlet channel is arranged in an inner region of the pump body surface which is located opposite to the membrane core of the membrane.